

6th Sunday of Easter

May 22, 2022

Mark 2:4 Adaptive Worship Service



1812 North Highland Avenue

Clearwater, Florida 33755

Ministers: The People of Grace Lutheran Church

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Pastor: Rev. Jefferson Cox

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Welcome! Visions abound in the readings for the sixth Sunday of Easter. Paul has a vision about what to do. John has a vision of what will be. Jesus provides visions of peace that surpasses human understanding and power beyond human imagination.

There are a few things to know about this service: you are not required to stand at any point though you can move around anytime you want or need, prayer slips are available for your prayers to be included in Prayer Time, and Holy Communion is served with gluten-free bread and grape juice.

GATHERING SONG

All Are Welcome

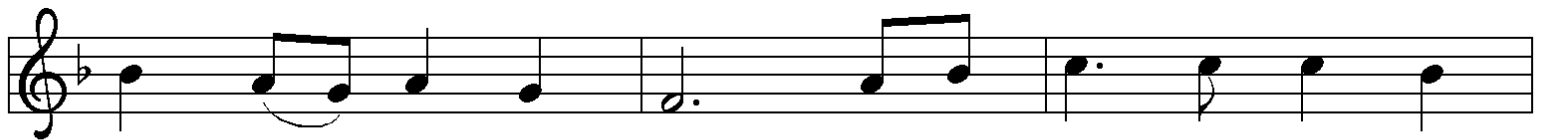
Verses 1 & 5



1 Let us build a house where love can dwell and all can safe - ly



live, a place where saints and chil - dren tell how



hearts learn to for - give. Built of hopes and dreams and



vi - sions, rock of faith and vault of grace; here the love of



Christ shall end di - vi - sions: All are wel - come,



all are wel - come, all are wel - come in this place.

5 Let us build a house where all are named,
their songs and visions heard
and loved and treasured, taught and claimed
as words within the Word.

Built of tears and cries and laughter,
prayers of faith and songs of grace,
let this house proclaim from floor to rafter:
All are welcome, all are welcome,
all are welcome in this place.

Text: Marty Haugen, b. 1950

Music: TWO OAKS, Marty Haugen

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GREETING

Worship Leader: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Congregation: And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Worship Leader: Let us pray. Bountiful God, you gather your people into your realm, and you promise us food from your tree of life. Nourish us with your word, that empowered by your Spirit we may love one another and the world you have made, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Congregation: Amen.

FIRST READING

Acts 16:9-15

Introduction to the Lesson: *A vision compels Paul to move his ministry into Greece.*

There he meets Lydia, an important person in the business community, whose heart has been opened by God to receive the gospel. Her conversion and baptism provide the impetus for the founding of the church at Philippi.

Reader: 9 That night Paul had a vision in which he saw a Macedonian standing and begging him, “Come over to Macedonia and help us!” 10 As soon as Paul had this vision, we got ready to leave for Macedonia, because we decided that God had called us to preach the Good News to the people there.

11 We left by ship from Troas and sailed straight across to Samothrace, and the next day to Neapolis. 12 From there we went inland to Philippi, a city of the first district of Mace-

donia; it is also a Roman colony. We spent several days there. 13 On the Sabbath we went out of the city to the riverside, where we thought there would be a place where Jews gathered for prayer. We sat down and talked to the women who gathered there. 14 One of those who heard us was Lydia from Thyatira, who was a dealer in purple cloth. She was a woman who worshiped God, and the Lord opened her mind to pay attention to what Paul was saying. 15 After she and the people of her house had been baptized, she invited us, “Come and stay in my house if you have decided that I am a true believer in the Lord.” And she persuaded us to go.

Reader: The word of the Lord.

Congregation: Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL

John 14:23-29

As Jesus talks of returning to the Father, he promises to send the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, who will teach Jesus' followers and remind them of all that Jesus taught. Even more, those in whom God makes a home will experience a peace that overcomes fear.

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to John in the 14th chapter.

Congregation: Glory to you, O Lord.

23 Jesus answered him, “Those who love me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and my Father and I will come to them and live with them. 24 Those who do not love me do not obey my teaching. And the teaching you have heard is not mine, but comes from the Father, who sent me.

25 “I have told you this while I am still with you. 26 The Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything and make you remember all that I have told you.

27 “Peace is what I leave with you; it is my own peace that I give you. I do not give it as the world does. Do not be worried and upset; do not be afraid. 28 You heard me say to you, ‘I am leaving, but I will come back to you.’ If you loved me, you would be glad that I am going to the Father; for he is greater than I. 29 I have told you this now before it all happens, so that when it does happen, you will believe.

After the reading...

Worship Leader: The gospel of the Lord. **Congregation: Praise to you, O Christ.**

GOSPEL MESSAGE—From Sundays and Seasons

Lifelong Learning

Graduates walk across the stage in cap and gown, receiving diplomas or degrees and pausing for pictures. The celebration marks the end of a time of learning and a transition to a time of doing. New jobs require orientation and more practical learning, but soon the employees are proficient at their work. The sheet metal apprentice becomes the ex-

pert journeyman. The accountant sees no more surprises in tax preparation. The retail worker masters the merchandise, the computer system, and dealing with difficult customers.

This movement from learning to knowing is not limited to work. We learn about civic issues and come to know where we stand. We learn about our faith and come to solid beliefs about our values. We learn about ourselves and who we are as people and settle into a sense of our own identity. One could call this process of learning and knowing through experience “lifelong learning.”

Jesus gives us an image of the Holy Spirit as teacher. But the Holy Spirit is not just any teacher; the Holy Spirit can teach us everything! The implication is that lifelong learning is less about information and more about what it means to be human, less about training and more about our relationship with God.

How do we experience the teaching of the Holy Spirit? Perhaps it is in the surprises of grace where someone’s generosity overwhelms us. Maybe it is in the nudges of knowing when an uncomfortable question opens up a place for us to reflect on our prejudices. Sometimes the font or table softens our heart in just the right moment to find a path for forgiveness.

With this promise of the Holy Spirit Jesus also leaves the gift of his peace, that in our learning and growing we may also know the peace that “surpasses all understanding” (Philippians 4:7).

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY

For the Beauty of the Earth verses 1 & 2



1 For the beau - ty of the earth, for the beau - ty of the skies,
2 For the won - der of each hour of the day and of the night,



for the love which from our birth o - ver and a - round us lies:
hill and vale and tree and flow'r, sun and moon and stars of light:



Christ, our God, to thee we raise this our sac - ri - fice of praise.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Worship Leader: Set free from captivity to sin and death, we pray to the God of resurrection for the church, people in need, and all of creation.

A brief silence.

Prayer Leader: Loving God, lead us to follow your Spirit, rather than our own prejudices or desires, as the church cares for one another. Open us to perceive your gifts in those we least expect. Lord, in your mercy, **Congregation: hear our prayer.**

Prayer Leader: Place holy love at the center of all our relationships and communities. By your love heal us, convict us, and renew us. Bring an end to racism in our churches and communities. Let everyone know your goodness by the love we show one another. Lord, in your mercy, **Congregation: hear our prayer.**

Prayer Leader: Hasten to dwell among those who are in pain or distress, especially those on the prayer list of our congregation, all those suffering from violence, terror, and natural disasters (including all those impacted by COVID-19), and those we name now with our lips or in our hearts..... As Christ enters our deepest suffering, remain with those experiencing despair and great need. Lord, in your mercy, **Congregation: hear our prayer.**

Worship Leader: In your mercy, O God, respond to these prayers, and renew us by your life-giving Spirit; through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

Congregation: Amen.

OFFERING

Offerings to the mission and ministry of Grace can be made online at GraceCLW.com (look for the "Donate" button), or (for now) by mailing a check to Grace Lutheran Church, 1812 N. Highland Ave. Clearwater FL 33755. Thank you for your continued financial support during these uncertain times. You can fill out your attendance form on our website as well.

OFFERING PRAYER

Prayer Leader: Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts: our selves, our time, and our possessions. Use us, and what we have gathered, in feeding the world with your love, through the one who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Congregation: Amen.

HOLY COMMUNION

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

Congregation: And also with you.

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

Congregation: We lift them to the Lord.

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

Congregation: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Pastor: It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, for the glorious resurrection of our Savior Jesus Christ, the true Paschal Lamb who gave himself to take away our sin; who in dying has destroyed death, and in rising has brought us to eternal life. And so, with Mary Magdalene and Peter and all the witnesses of the resurrection, with earth and sea and all their creatures, and with angels and archangels, cherubim and seraphim, we praise your name.

Pastor: In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Pastor: Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Pastor: Pour out upon us the Spirit of your love, O Lord, and unite the wills of all who share this heavenly food, the body and blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord; to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory, now and forever.

Congregation: Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Pastor: Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray in whichever language is closest to our hearts.

Congregation: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

PRAYERS AFTER COMMUNION

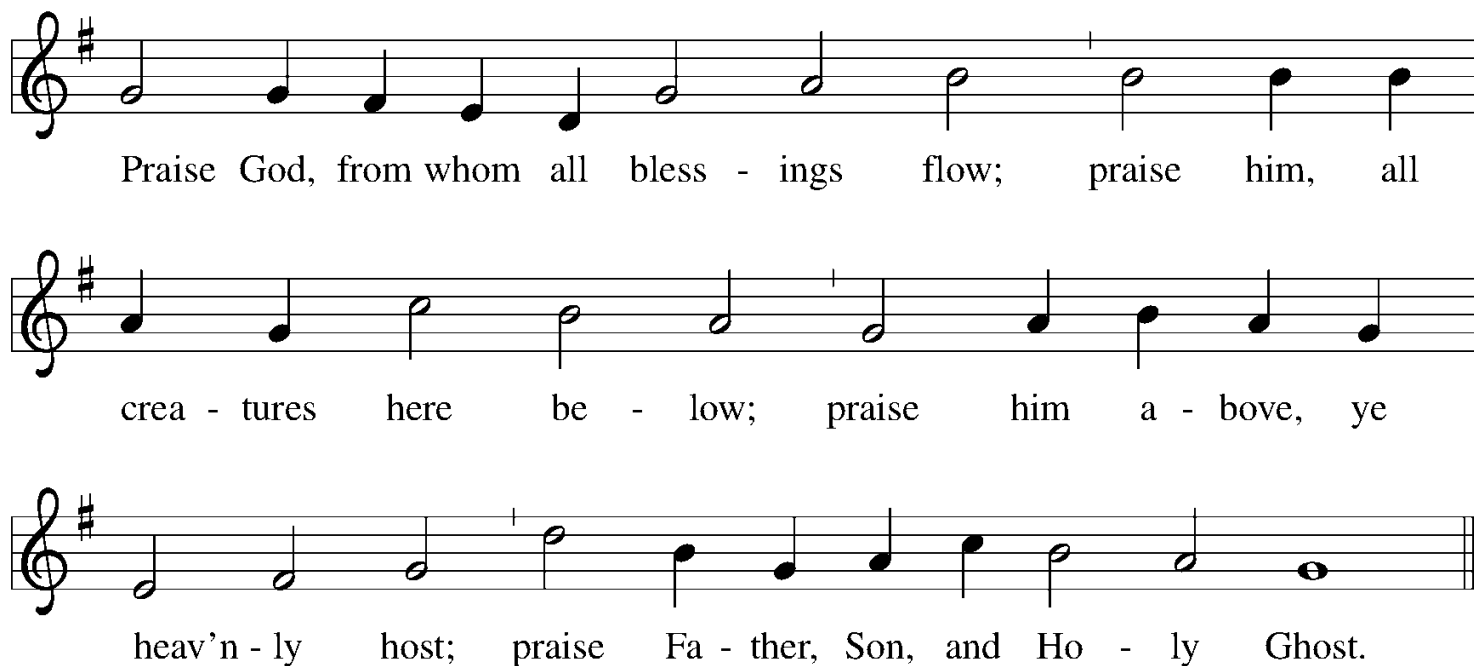
Prayer Leader: Let us pray. We give you thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us through the healing power of this gift of life. In your mercy, strengthen us through this gift, in faith toward you and in fervent love toward one another.

Congregation: Amen.

Pastor: Gracious God, loving all your family with a mother's tender care: As you sent the angel to feed Elijah with heavenly bread, help those who go to share your word and sacrament with those who are sick, homebound, or imprisoned. In your love and care, nourish and strengthen those who will receive this sacrament, and give us all the comfort of your everlasting presence through the body and blood of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Congregation: Amen.**

BLESSING

Worship Leader: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord's face shine on you with



Praise God, from whom all bless - ings flow; praise him, all
crea - tures here be - low; praise him a - bove, ye
heav'n - ly host; praise Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost.

Text: Thomas Ken, 1637–1711

Music: OLD HUNDREDTH, Louis Bourgeois, 1510–1561

grace and mercy. The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace.

Congregation: Amen.

SENDING SONG

The Doxology

DISMISSAL

Pastor: Together we have heard God's Word and shared in the Lord's Supper, we have given and have been forgiven. Now as this service of worship is ending, this week's service to the world is beginning! Go in peace. Tell what God has done.

Congregation: Thanks be to God!